



HEATHER ACHESON/POST-RECORD

The Camas Moose Lodge, owned by the city, could be remodeled and used as a community center. An option to remodel it for \$1.7 million has been recommended by the Camas Parks Commission and forwarded to City Council for discussion Tuesday, Feb. 21.

Moose Lodge could be remodeled into a community center

Council discussion is expected Feb. 21

By DAWN FELDHAUS
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Camas City Councilwoman Melissa Smith would like to see day camp activities offered for local youth in the summer — activities such as kayak classes on Lacamas Lake, as well as volleyball and badminton.

Smith said by phone Monday she could be in favor of remodeling the Camas Moose Lodge for use as a community center. The \$1.7 million proposal, known as "Option

D," has been recommended by the Camas Parks and Recreation Commission and forwarded to City Council for discussion Tuesday, Feb. 21.

The Moose Lodge area is a 4.8 acre parcel, located at 227 N.E. Lake Road. The building was built in the 1940s as a boat repair shop. The property was purchased from the Moose by the city in 2000, and the building has been rented by the Moose since that time.

Smith, the council liaison to the Parks Commission, said several topics have to be researched, including funding and shoreline permit issues.

The remodeling of the Moose Lodge would include upgrading

the electrical wiring, replacing the existing plumbing and HVAC system, replacing the dock and decommissioning an underground fuel storage tank. Improvements would be made to walkways, trails, landscaping and 64 parking spaces. There would also be a structural seismic upgrade to anchor the exterior walls to the foundation wall.

Grant money could be available to pay for the remodel of the dock and the construction of a supporting plaza area.

Smith said remodeling the Moose Lodge could make it available for additional events and ac-

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tivities, while the current community center at 1718 S.E. Seventh Ave., is also utilized.

"We have cut programs, because we don't have enough room and resources," she said.

Smith foresees the Moose Lodge being available for family reunions and wedding receptions.

"I like to think big," she said. "There is a lot of beauty and nature there. There are a lot of possibilities."

Smith said a decision on the remodel of the Moose Lodge has not been made yet, and she wants to hear from citizens.

Kyle Newberg, president of the Loyal order of the Moose Lodge 1042, said the organization has not purchased property elsewhere in case Moose members need to relocate.

"That has not happened," he said Thursday. "We're looking."

Jim Walsh, from J.D. Walsh Associates, and Jack McKinney, a principal architect with Architects Associative, of Vancouver, made a presentation about potential plans for the Moose Lodge property during the Camas planning conference Jan. 27.

A study was commissioned by the city in November 2011.

"We all know it's a great view, so how do we capture that?" McKinney said, regarding a remodel.

Camas Mayor Scott Higgins described the remodel of the Moose Lodge as a potential "Phase 1" of a community center project.

Additional phases could eventually include additions on the Buhman Property, located across the street from the lodge.

"Something like this could establish some positive momentum," Higgins said. "It's a tangible goal."

Randy Curtis, chairperson of the Camas Community Center Development Committee, said during the planning conference he

does not see the proposal for a \$24 million community center on the Buhman property moving forward for at least two years.

"This one cannot proceed as I see it without voter approval," he said. "The timing is not right. I just don't think we can take it to the taxpayers right now."

Brent Erickson, chairman of the Camas Parks and Recreation Commission, said the park board is 100 percent behind the Moose Lodge renovation concept.

"For a town our size and the demand put on the existing facility, this would be a wonderful attribute because of its setting on the lake and the look it would have," he said. "Citizens would be proud of the community center plan."

"The existing community center has outlived its life," Erickson added.

Heather Acheson contributed to this article.

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